Collaborative efforts to promote inter-sectoral programme activities including workplace interventions and public-private partnerships.

Build technical and managerial capacities for programme implementation through Surveillance, Training, Monitoring and Evaluation, Technical resource groups, operational research and Programme management.

(d) Yes, Sir. Because of high degree of stigma and discrimination attached to this disease, the AIDS cases are not coming openly resulting in under-reporting of cases in all States and UTs including six high prevalence States. The States having weak health care infrastructure are also likely to have more under-reporting of AIDS cases.

(e) To assess the HIV prevalence in various risk groups of population like Female sex workers, Injecting drug Users, Men having sex with Men (MSM) and among antenatal women as marker of general population, National AIDS Control Organisation is conducting annual round of HIV sentinel surveillance in designated sites all over the country. This approach is regarded as an epidemiological tool to monitor HIV trends in these risk groups by collecting data of satistically appropriate sample size. The frequency of data collection is on an annual basis and the entire process is unlinked anonymous. The latest round was planned in 670 sites and conducted in 659 sites covering all States/UTs in the country during 2004.

Change in design of second class sleeper coaches

3985. SHRI V. HANUMANTHA RAO: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that no change in design of second class sleeper coaches has been made by railways for twenty years;

(b) whether it is also a fact that passengers find it very difficult to climb to the upper berths in second class coaches;

(c) whether the design institutes or railway institutes are unable to come up with a better design of railway coaches;

(d) the steps proposed to be taken by the railways to change the design to make the coaches passenger-friendly; and

(e) the reasons for ignoring the great dis-comfort being caused to passengers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) No, Sir. Several design up-gradations have been introduced in Sleeper class coaches, a few of which are as under:

i. The initial design of these coaches had wooden planks in seats, which has since been replaced with cushioned berths for comfort of passengers.

ii. Vacuum brakes are being replaced with air brakes for increased reliability and safety.

iii. Materials used in the interior of coaches have been upgraded from time to time not only for aesthetics but also for superior fire retardant properties.

iv. Provision of Emergency windows to facilitate emergency exit of passengers.

v. Improved illumination with changeover to 110 Volt Direct Current (V DC) supply instead of 24 V DC.

vi. Provisions of anti climbing feature using Centre Buffer Coupler to enhance passenger safety.

(b) A convenient foot ladder has been provided in sleeper coaches. Second class coaches, however, do not have upper berths.

(c) and (d) As explained above, coach design has undergone several improvements. Further improvements being made in sleeper class coaches include provision of snack table, water bottle holder and magazine rack etc.

(e) Constant efforts are being made to make passenger coaches more and more passenger friendly. Efforts are also being made to develop Second Class variants of coaches using imported technology from Linke Hoffman Busch (LHB), Germany.